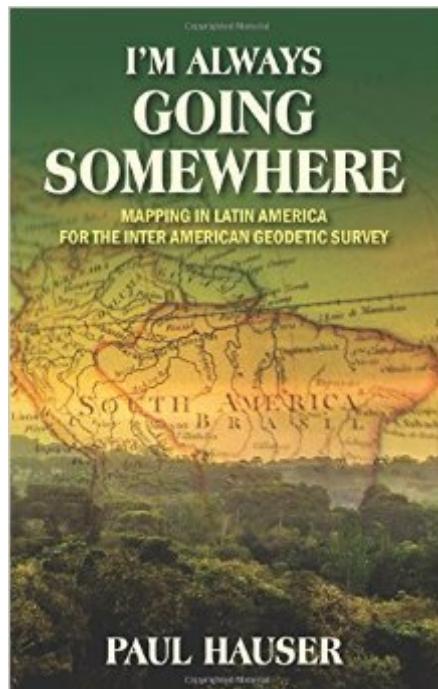


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I'm Always Going Somewhere: Mapping In Latin America For The Inter American Geodetic Survey



Synopsis

The Inter American Geodetic Survey (IAGS) was one of those little known U.S. Army (and later U.S. Department of Defense) programs established in April of 1946. At the end of WWII there had been a shortage of mapping that had impaired military operations in many parts of the world. Our government (including the military) became concerned about the effects of political unrest and Communists influence in the Latin Americam region, so they instituted a number of programs designed to bring Latin America under American influence and to foster democratic principals and improve economic conditions. IAGS was one of those programs whose mission was mapping the nations of Latin America from the Mexican border to the tip of South America. When IAGS personnel speak of mapping Latin America they refer to a total area of more than 10 million square miles. It was an area of largely undeveloped land including vast tracks of some of the most inhospitable terrain on earth. I was hired by IAGS in 1968 as a Geodesist and sent to work out of the Panama Canal Zone. This, along with the help of my IAGS friends, is our story. To qualify as adventurous a book must tell of persons and events that are unusual and have charm of the unexpected and excite wonder. As an author, my efforts have been to be as accurate as possible of the dates, locations and events that transpired so that this book is a contribution to the history IAGS mapping and intelligence gathering in Latin America. We have always been drawn to books that tell us about how, " truth is stranger than fiction."

Book Information

Paperback: 132 pages

Publisher: Outskirts Press (July 23, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1478725176

ISBN-13: 978-1478725176

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.3 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (16 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #282,873 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #38 inÂ Books > Engineering & Transportation > Engineering > Civil & Environmental > Surveying & Photogrammetry #131 inÂ Books > History > Historical Study & Educational Resources > Historical Geography #617 inÂ Books > Science & Math > Earth Sciences > Geography

Customer Reviews

If you have the urge to go and explore the jungles, mountains and savannah of Honduras, you should first read this excellent book on what to expect. In 1968 Paul Hauser, with his IAGS team of surveying professionals and supply support pilots, learned first hand how inhospitable it could be. The weather, the insects, the poisonous snakes and the crocodiles made the cartographers' life hell, not forgetting the occasional bandidos. Using the stories and experiences of fellow workers, the author has crafted chapters of drama and survival, including written input by Roald Bendixen who details his surveying in Guatemala, Columbia and Easter Island. Also, as a nice touch, the author has not forgotten the stories and cameraderie of the IAGS wives stationed in the Panama Canal Zone.

What an incredible journey, physically and emotionally, this group had to endure! I felt like I was living each experience with them. They performed an invaluable service for these countries and lived to tell about it!! A great read!

I read with great interest, the new book, "I'm Always Going Somewhere." It's a vivid description of what life was like for a crew of Americans who explored, mapped and conducted a detailed geodetic survey in Latin America in the late 1960s. The project was literally filling in the blank spaces on the map. There's some technical information for those who want to know more but not too much to spoil a good story. A number of photos in the book show how primitive their working conditions and equipment were at that time. There are several chapters from another team member as well as a chapter written by one of the wives. This book is great read for the armchair traveler to explore a little known piece of American history.

This charming little book gives readers a look back at a little known but important piece of U.S. history in the 60's and 70's that did not contribute to war and exploitation. Instead it documents the adventures of a small group of civilians who were tasked with advancing geographical knowledge of vast uncharted territories for both the U.S. and the countries involved. That they were young and undaunted by the challenges of the unknown and inhospitable landscapes they penetrated and seemed to have fun doing it adds to the fun of reading this narrative. No maps! They were creating them. No cell phones. No i-pads or laptops. No motels. Just bulky mapping instruments and primitive accommodations. And stories and friendships to last a lifetime.

I loved the book! It's written in such an entertaining way that I felt I was there:) My dad is Jack

Rosholt and he was part of IAGS in 1952. He is retired and living here in Santa Cruz, Bolivia . I'm sure he would love to tell some of his stories.

This book is a great read. It offers a glimpse into a little known part of USA history in Latin America. The individuals discussed in this book had to put up with tremendous hardships while performing their duties for the IGSW. These stories truly are "stranger than fiction." I highly recommend this interesting and informative piece of adventure non-fiction.

A nice little collection of reminiscences about a few people's adventures in Central America. Before GPS, American satellites and ultimately Google Maps made topographies of the world's furthest reaches, it was the largely the work of men and women in obscure government agencies like IAGS who trudged up and down the world's backwaters benchmarking elevations and identifying places. Not much has been written about this agency, so it's nice to get the first-hand experiences of those who lived it.

I really enjoyed reading this book about how mapping used to be done. The stories about how these adventuresome men mapped the Latin American countries was fascinating. They dealt with rugged conditions, met wonderfully interesting people in the countries they worked in, and had fantastic adventures as they discovered new lands and created the maps we use today. This was a great lesson in how land was discovered and mapped. I'd recommend this book to anyone interested in the early adventures of geography and land surveying.

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